

Basic Information and Tips for Coaches

Introduction:

Recreational and Select Soccer: There are 2 types of youth soccer programs; one is called “recreational” (or “rec”) and the other is called “select”, “club”, or “travel”. Obviously we are a “recreational” league and strive to teach the fundamentals of youth soccer.

Soccer is a game played primarily with the feet. The head and other parts of the body can be used but the hands and arms (up to the shoulder) cannot be used except on a “throw in” and by the goalie in certain circumstances. Soccer is very much a team sport and coaching begins to make a great difference by age 9. A “well coached” team means that players have been taught in practice the skills, teamwork, and other things they need to know so they can have fun and be successful playing soccer.

Below is some basic information that you will find useful in your coaching days that lie ahead.

Small Sided Games and Formations:

Most youth leagues play with less than 11 players per side until U-12 or U-14. This is called playing "**Small Sided**". At U-6, there may be as few as 3 per side; at U-8, 4 or 5 per side; at U-10, 6 to 8 per side, etc. At young ages it is much better to play small sided; the players get many more "touches" on the ball & it is much easier to teach them the important concepts such as "**support**", "**First Defender**", to "**shift & sag**", and to spread out & get open for passes. In small sided games with 5 or less players per side, you shouldn't worry about "formations" or "positions" but should teach basic concepts, teamwork, passing, dribbling & basic tactics such as "**sagging**" & to mark up behind a man when the other team has a throw-in or is near our goal.

Benefits of Small Sided Games:

- Fewer players on the field
- Reduces the size of “swarm”;
- Creates more touches;
- Does not allow players to “hide” or be excluded from the activity;
- Presents realistic but simple soccer challenges;
- Requires players to make simple but realistic soccer decisions;
- Realistic Experience + Fun = Improvement in Play

U-6 = 4 vs. 4 with no goalies

U-8 = 4 vs. 4 with no goalies

U-10 = 8 vs. 8 with one goalie

U-12 = 9 vs. 9 with one goalie

U-14 = 11 vs. 11 with one goalie

Equipment:

All players must wear shinguards to every practice and every game. Hard surfaces of shinguards must be covered with socks. (Referees will check this). Encourage parents to buy properly sized shinguards that have a hard surface (plastic or fiberglass) and padding to cover the anklebone.

No shoes with front cleats may be worn (i.e., no baseball or football shoes if they have a front cleat, unless you cut it off). Only rubber cleats are allowed; metal cleats are not allowed. (Referees will check).

No jewelry, metal devices, or hazardous equipment may be worn. (Casts can be allowed if they are padded & the Referee approves them before the game).

*** Rules will be provided by the Mt. Vernon Parks and Recreation Department.**

Encourage Learning and Tolerate Mistakes:

If your team is learning & trying new things, they will make a lot of mistakes. You must accept this fact & be tolerant of mistakes. If you aren't, you will discourage them from trying new things. Encourage them to try new things & encourage the effort even if it doesn't work. Examples: "Great try. Keep it up." or "Good idea; try it again."

Rewarding or Punishing Performance.

Never punish or scold a child for lack of ability. All you can expect them to do is their best (e.g., Don't make those who lose a game or come in last run laps, or do jumps, or sit out while others play). Tell everyone, including the unathletic players, that you are proud of them if they are trying hard. You will have some athletic players and some unathletic players. Measure each player's performance by their personal improvement & effort, and not by comparing them to someone else. Try to motivate in a positive way that builds self-esteem. See "Incentives" below for ideas about rewarding practice and game attendance, hustle and effort.

Measuring Success:

In recreational soccer, consider measuring success in these ways:

- a. Is everyone having fun?
- b. Are they learning about teamwork?
- c. Are they learning something about soccer (i.e. are they improving?)
- d. Are they hustling, enthusiastic and doing their best?

Be a Good Role Model

To a large degree, your players & parents will follow your lead. Be a good sport & don't yell at the referees or at the other team. After the game, seek out the referees and shake their hand and thank them, even if they made some bad calls.

Things you Should and Should NOT do:

- a. Positive encouragement and instruction of your players from the sidelines (the coach's box) is allowed. Negative criticism, hostility, abuse or anger are things you should not do. You are a role model and must set the example of good sportsmanship and insist upon it from your team.
- b. Cheering when the other team makes a mistake is bad. Cheering when the other team makes a great play is good.
- c. Never criticize the referee. It is a tough job. If an appealable mistake is made, talk to the referee and then the Director of Referees after the game. Remember, you are the role model and must set the standard for behavior. It is good to thank the referee and linesmen after the game. Youth league referees are volunteers and often unpaid and untrained. Yelling at the referees is poor sporting behavior and it sends the wrong message to kids.

- d. Don't run up the score. It's not good for either team if the game is a mismatch, but sometimes it happens. If your team gets 5 goals ahead, you should be a good sport & do one of the following:
 - o Put your weakest scorers up front (use this as an opportunity to let them be forwards).
 - o Try someone new in goal & at fullback
 - o Pull a player off the field & "play short". If it is still a mismatch, pull off another player.
 - o Tell your players they must complete 5 consecutive passes before shooting
 - o Tell them they can only take shots from outside the Penalty Box (i.e., practice chip shots, lofted shots at the top of the goal or power shots).

10 Keys to Being a Good Coach:

- a. Know the basics of the sport.
- b. Plan for your season and practices.
- c. Conduct effective practices.
- d. Teach skills and tactics.
- e. Correct players in a way that helps them improve.
- f. Teach and model good sporting behavior.
- g. Provide for safety.
- h. Communicate effectively with players, parents, referees, and league administrators.

25 Things to Teach Young Soccer Players:

- 1. Always play fairly, according to the spirit and letter of the rules.
- 2. Stay calm under difficult conditions. It's easy to maintain composure when things go right; when they don't real athletes step forward and stand up to the test.
- 3. Support and encourage your teammates at all times. All of us make mistakes at times and they are not done on purpose. Encourage your teammates to be the best they can be.
- 4. Play as hard as you can in practice and in games. **Never** be beaten because of lack of effort. Even opponents who are bigger or more skilled than you can be beaten if you **out-hustle** them.
- 5. Show **respect** to your coaches, referees, and your opponents; win or lose.
- 6. A good soccer player must have conditioning, skills and tactical knowledge. A player must work on all three to be the best they can be.
- 7. When your team has the ball, everyone is an attacker; when your opponent has the ball everyone is a defender.
- 8. No matter what position you are in, **you are first a soccer player** and you will have to be able to receive, shoot, pass, dribble, head, make space, etc., regardless of your position.
- 9. Do not just "kick" the ball unless it is in a dangerous position in front of your goal. Instead take a "picture" of the situation before you get the ball. In this way you can perceive the

situation, determine the best solution, and act accordingly when the ball arrives. **Develop Field Vision.** Always send the ball to someplace or someone.

10. Always maintain your position. Don't run following the movement of the ball. Know where you are on the field in relation to where the other players and positions are on the field.

11. Don't run forward when your team has the ball unless you are willing to run back when the other team has the ball.

12. If you lose the ball, you should be the first person to defend. Giving immediate chase is the first rule of defense.

13. When changing from attack to defense, sprint to get between your opponent and the goal you are defending.

14. When defending close to your goal, the player closest to the ball should attack the ball. The other defenders should "mark" other opponents who could receive and shoot the ball. In "marking up" your opponent, you should position yourself between the ball and your opponent and prevent them from receiving the ball. A common error on defense is to have too many defenders move to the ball leaving opponents open to receive a pass and score an unopposed goal.

15. On the defensive side of the field, always move the ball toward the touchlines and away from the middle of the field. On the offensive side of the field move the ball toward the centre, where your teammates can take a good shot on goal. This is "centering" the ball.

16. Good ball handlers pass the ball before they get into trouble not after they are in trouble.

17. Make no small strikes on the ball. Whether clearing, passing or shooting **MOVE** the ball. Proper technique on striking the ball will enable even small players to effectively move the ball a good distance.

18. Take your shot! **Don't hesitate** to fire a shot if you feel an opportunity. Shoot into the back of the net. Shoot where the keeper isn't.

19. Don't limit yourself to shots taken only near the goal line. Good opportunities for goals are hard shots taken further out from the goal. Keep your head down, strike and follow through the ball for the goal.

20. Most players are right-footed. At this level, when playing defense against an opponent with the ball especially watch and attack against the right foot.

21. When playing offense with possession of the ball, anticipate your defender attacking your right foot. **Use your left foot.** It is imperative that you develop your passing, dribbling, and shooting skills with both your left and right foot.

22. Always be aware of protecting **possession** of the ball. Resist "kicking" the ball directly into the shin guards of the defender in front of you. Passing or dribbling the ball laterally or even backwards can be a better choice if it maintains possession of the ball.

23. When on offense always "support" your teammate with the ball. Supporting your teammate means being in a position where they can pass the ball to you. Stay far enough away so the pass effectively neutralizes the defender. Stay close enough so they can make a good pass. If you are

too far to make a good pass to your teammate, then you are too far for your teammate to make a good pass to you, and you are not supporting.

24. Win, lose or tie; if you have given 100%, when you walk off the field you have nothing to regret and no reason to be ashamed.

25. Don't be afraid to be a hero. **YOU CAN DO IT!**

Basic Skills that Should be Taught.

Ball Control

There are three important points for good ball control:

1. The first touch should protect the ball from challenging players and not give them a chance to regain possession.
2. The ball should be played into available space to allow for the next touch.
3. The ball should be played so that the team's movement or momentum is continued.

A poor first-touch will risk taking the momentum out of play and increase the possibility of losing possession. Some players make the mistake of stopping the movement of the ball and not concentrating on getting it out of their feet. The first touch should ensure that a time wasting second touch is not needed to get the ball ready to pass or shoot.

The different body surfaces often used in controlling the ball are the foot (sole, inside, outside, instep), thigh, chest, stomach and head. Generally, the part of the body used should preferably be large, flat and able to take the weight of the incoming pass.

The key coaching points for general ball control are:

- Keep the head steady and watch the ball carefully to judge its flight and speed.
- Move feet quickly so the body is in front of the ball.
- Choose the right **technique** and **body surface** to control the ball (for example, the foot).
- Relax the body part.
- Cushion the force of the ball by pulling back the body part being used to control the ball.
- Pretend the body part is a pillow or something soft. The ball should not go very far after it contacts the body.
- Maintain eye contact with ball until fully controlled.

Dribbling

Another important aspect of ball control is the ability to run with the ball.

The key coaching points are:

- Use short steps.
- Push the ball forward gently with the inside or the outside of the foot. Alternate feet.
- Keep the ball close and in front.
- Use peripheral vision (that is, the 'corner' of the eye) to look at the ball while watching the direction being travelled. As skill increases, look less at the ball.
- Monitor speed based on ability to keep the ball close.

Passing

Successful passing is the key to good teamwork. Teaching the technique of passing is actually quite straightforward but it is not always easy to spot and remedy the mistakes that children make.

The key coaching points are:

- Use inside of the foot (the instep).
- The non-striking foot should be pointing in the direction of the intended target.
- The striking leg makes a swinging motion similar to a putter in golf.
- The striking ankle must be locked.
- Stay relaxed. Don't be like a robot.
- Look up to find your target but remember to look at the ball as you strike it. That is the only way the player can strike the ball correctly.
- Foot follows through in direction of target.
- Move afterwards – don't stand there admiring your pass!

The Push Pass

The push pass is used to pass the ball over short distances.

The key coaching points are:

- Plant the non-kicking foot beside ball.
- The kicking foot should be pointing sideways with the inside of the foot facing the ball.
- Push the ball towards target.

Inside of the Foot Pass

This is the method used for passing the ball over longer distances, or in situations where the pass requires some extra power.

The key coaching points are:

- Non-kicking foot next to the ball.
- Contact ball in the middle.
- Use the inside of the foot.
- Follow through so your kicking foot goes to your target.
- Use a firm kick so it gets to your target.

Common Mistakes

These are some common mistakes and how to correct them:

- **If the ball is off target, but rolling well** - the player has not pointed her non-striking foot at the target.
- **If the ball spins off the foot** - the ankle was not locked when striking the ball.
- **If the ball goes in the air** - the player has struck the ball below the centreline of the ball and it will rise. Striking the ball above the centreline will ensure that it rolls on the ground.

- **If the pass lacks power or the player falls down after passing** – the player tried to swing her or his leg **ACROSS** the body instead of on a line with the hips and shoulders.

Shooting

To score goals, players need to be able to use both power and placement.

The key coaching points are:

- Keep the head down and eyes on the ball – look up to pick out the target, but then look back at the ball to shoot.
- Plant non-striking foot alongside (not in front of) the ball.
- Strike the middle of the ball so it doesn't rise.
- Keep the knee of the kicking leg over the ball.
- Approach the ball slightly from the side.
- Follow through, don't jerk back when striking the ball (loses power).

Kicking for Distance

Especially in defense, the long kick is important for clearing the ball.

The key coaching points are:

- Non-kicking foot next to the ball.
- Contact ball below the middle of the ball.
- Contact ball with instep of foot.
- Follow through.
- Kick hard!

Heading

Heading is an inevitable part of soccer, both in attack and defence, but can be dangerous for smaller children (see warning below). If teaching heading, as a general rule, defensive headers should go **high, wide** and **far**, while offensive headers should be aimed towards the ground (as ground balls are harder for keepers to handle). Defenders usually will aim for the bottom half of the ball while attackers usually will aim for the top half. Initially, of course, it is most important to teach the correct technique (and the courage to use it), so it is not too important where the ball goes.

The key coaching points are:

- Put feet in a balanced, athletic, ready position with knees bent and weight centered evenly.
- Keep the neck stiff and lean back.
- Keep eyes **OPEN**, and watch the ball until contact!
- Keep mouth **CLOSED** to avoid injury!
- Move head forward towards the ball and contact the ball with the forehead area between hairline and eyebrows.

- Arms should reach forward as the ball is coming and pull backwards as the head moves forward.
- Follow through to the target area.
- If you hit the ball on its bottom half, the ball will go up.
- If you hit the ball on its upper half, the ball will go down.

Warning - *There could be the risk of injury to the spine from the excess compacting effect of heading the ball. Heading skills can be left for intensive development until the early teens(it is recommended for children above 12 years old) - particularly as the skill of heading is something older players can cope with better than a non-discerning youngster. Heading the ball is an inevitable part of any soccer match, so for this reason it is important to show players how to head the ball correctly. Just don't do it too much!*

The Throw In

When the ball goes out of play, it must be put back into play by a 'throw in'. The key coaching points of the 'throw in' are:

- Face target, feet shoulder width apart (or one in front of the other as long as they both remain on the ground when the ball is released).
- Grip ball firmly with two hands.
- Lean back and bring the ball over the head.
- Transfer weight forward, quickly bring the arms forward and fully extend them at the point of release.
- Ball is released in front of head.
- Add a short run to generate momentum.

Goalkeeping

Children should not start specialising in any positions until they are a bit older. Therefore, teaching goalkeeping skills to smaller children is a great way to help them understand the game better.

The key coaching points are:

- Start with the ready position – balance on the balls (or front) of the feet, bend comfortably at the knees while keeping as tall as possible, and have the hands relaxed through the fingertips.
- Hand positioning for high balls – the hands should form a supple web that surrounds the back side (closest to the goal) of the ball. Fingertips should be pointed up and palms facing forward. The thumbs of both hands are almost touching.
- Hand positioning for low balls – the hands should form a supple web that surrounds the back side (closest to the goal) of the ball. Fingers should be pointed down and palms facing forward. The little fingers of both hands are almost touching.

- Side-step quickly behind the line of the ball and try to get two hands behind the ball.
- Create barriers between the ball and the goal with the body, legs and hands and have as much of body behind the ball as possible.
- Concentrate until the ball is in the hands, relax at the point of contact and cushion the ball towards the body with hands.
- Attack the ball whenever possible.

Tackling

In soccer, the term “tackling” is used to describe any effort to steal the soccer ball or knock it away from an opposing player. There are two types of tackling – block and slide tackling. Slide tackling can be dangerous, and is banned in some children’s leagues. Block tackling is safer, and will be taught in this manual. It is important to point out that the player is tackling the **ball itself** and not the opponent.

The key coaching points of block tackling are:

- Place the non-kicking foot alongside the ball.
- The ankle joint of the tackling foot must be firm and locked.
- The knees should be bent to lower the centre of gravity of the player.
- The head and upper body should be over the ball.
- The hands should be closed (make a fist). This will tighten the upper body.
- Contact is made with the inside of the foot.
- Contact on the ball should be made through the middle of the ball.

Mt. Vernon Parks and Recreation

10 Basic Soccer Rules

Rule 1- No Hands

This is an easy rule that most people who know nothing about soccer still know that you cannot use your hands unless you are the goalie.

A couple of points to clarify:

First, the rule for a hand ball includes any part of the body from the tips of the fingers to the shoulder.

Second, the proper way to look at this soccer rule is that a player cannot “handle” the ball. A ball that is kicked and hits a player’s hand or arm is not a handball. This means the referee must use their own judgment to determine whether contact was accidental or a purposeful attempt to gain an advantage.

Goalkeeping handballs; there is also a situation in which the goalie cannot use their hands. This is sometimes called the back- pass rule. Goalkeepers cannot pick up a pass that came directly from one of their team-mates. In this case, the goalkeeper must use his feet. Infraction of this soccer rule will result in an indirect kick from the point of the infraction.

Rule 2 - Equipment

The basic equipment for soccer required by the FIFA Laws of the Game are:

- jersey or shirt
- shorts
- socks
- shinguards
- footwear

The Mt. Vernon Parks and Recreation Department will provide a shirt and socks for each player.

There is no requirement for children to have shoes with cleats. Regular tennis shoes are fine, but not recommended. If kids wear cleats they must not have the toe cleat.

No necklaces, earrings, or other jewelry will be allowed. If a child just had their ears pierced, the studs should be covered with taped or removed.

Rule 3 – Start and Restart

A kick-off is the way a soccer game is started or restarted:

- at the start of the game
- after a goal has been scored
- at the start of the second half

The ball is placed in the center of the field. All players must be in their own half of the field and the opponents of the team taking the kick off must be at least 10 yards from the ball. The referee will blow his/her whistle to indicate they are ready for the kick-off. The ball is in play when it is kicked and moved forward.

Note that the two touch rule applies here (see Rule 8)

After a team has scored a goal, the kick-off is taken by the other team.

Rule 4 – Throw-ins

A throw-in is taken when the ball crosses the sideline and leaves the field. The two basic soccer rules for a proper throw-in are to have both feet on the ground and to throw the ball with both hands over the head.

To clarify, both feet must be on the ground ***when the ball is thrown.*** The player can run, hop, or do cartwheels up to the point when the ball is released but not *when* the ball is released. Dragging the toes of one foot is considered legal.

For teaching purposes it is common to allow younger players to take more than one attempt.

Rule 5 – Corner Kicks and Goal Kicks

A corner kick or a goal kick is taken when the ball leaves the field across a goal line.

If the offensive team kicks it out, play is restarted with a goal kick. If the defensive team kicks it out, play is restarted with a corner kick.

The goal kick is taken from anywhere inside the “goalie box”.

The corner kick is taken from the corner nearest to where the ball left the field.

You may be confused at times to see a goal kick retaken. This is because the FIFA soccer rules state that the ball is not “back in play” until it leaves the penalty area, the large box outside the

“goalie box” (see diagram if needed). If either team touches the ball before it leaves the penalty area the kick must be retaken, and if the ball is not kicked well enough to leave the area, the kick must be retaken.

Rule 6 – Direct and Indirect Free Kicks

Direct and indirect kicks are two primary ways that play is restarted after the referee stops play for an infraction.

For both of these the ball must be stationary before the ball is kicked and the opposing players must be at least 10 yards away (smaller yardage for smaller age groups).

The simple difference between the two is this: On a direct kick you can score by kicking the ball directly into the goal. On an indirect kick you cannot score. An indirect kick must be touched by another player before it can go into the goal.

In general, a direct kick comes from a contact foul or hand ball. Everything else is indirect.

Rule 7 – Penalty Kick

A penalty kick results from a contact foul or hand ball by the defending team within the penalty area- the large box on either end of the field. It's a type of direct kick also.

The ball is placed on the penalty spot or mark, 12 yards in front of the center of the goal.

All players must remain outside the penalty area and the penalty arc until the ball is kicked. The goalkeeper must have both feet on the goal line until the ball is kicked.

If after the ball is kicked, it rebounds off the keeper and stays on the field, the ball is live and anyone can play it, with the exception of the person who just kicked the ball. If the ball rebounds off of the goal and back into play, the person who kicked the ball cannot play it until the ball is touched by another player-otherwise they will be called for two touches. (See Rule 8)

Rule 8 – Two-touch Rule

A player cannot touch the ball twice in a row when putting the ball in play. You will see this called multiple times in youth soccer. It is most frequent on kick-offs, corner kicks, or direct and

indirect kicks. If a kid barely hits the ball and decides to take another swipe at it, that is a two-touch violation.

This also applies to throw-ins. A kid cannot throw the ball in and then kick it.

The only exception is on a drop ball restart.

Rule 9 – Fouls and Punishment

The common rule on fouls is “If it looks like a foul, it probably is.”

A player cannot kick, trip, jump at, charge, strike, push, hold, or spit at an opponent. Bumping or going shoulder-to-shoulder while competing for a ball is not a foul until the elbows come up. This is a bit of a judgment call and not all referees will call it the same. Remember that safety is a priority.

The normal consequence of a foul is a direct kick for the opposing team. Punishment is given in soccer with yellow and red cards. Cards are not used within the Parks and Recreation department. The coaches are liable for the actions of their players and trust that nothing will get out of hand.

Rule 10 – Offside

I saved the best for the last. Offside is not called at the U-6, and U-8 levels, U-10 is called on a learning curve, same for U-12.

Even though the rule is not always called, it is a good idea to know the rule anyways.

The first thing to know is that you cannot be offside on a corner kick, goal kick, or throw-in. It is not an offense for a player to be in an offside position. The player must be involved in active play as determined by the referee to be called offside.

An offensive or attacking player can't be ahead of the ball and involved in the play unless there is a defender between him and the goalkeeper. Or, you can't hang out at the other team's goal waiting for the ball.

You can't be offside if you are standing on your half of the field. Also, the offside rule applies *when the ball is kicked* not when the player receives the ball.

COACHING GUIDELINES

1. **COMMUNICATION:** Ensure the terminology you use is clear and precise. Let players know you are in charge.
 2. **POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT:** Whenever possible give individuals and/or groups positive reinforcement. Refrain from using negative comments. Use praise as an incentive.
 3. **BE CREATIVE AND USE INITIATIVE:** If the drill or game is too advanced, modify to increase the chances of success.
 4. **MAKE A DIFFERENCE:** Be motivational and inspirational. Enthusiasm and being energetic are contagious.
 5. **KEEP PLAYERS ACTIVE:** If the drill is static, create need of helpers or assistants to keep everyone involved.
 6. **EACH PLAYER IS AN INDIVIDUAL:** Be aware of player differences. Aggressive or quiet, recognition of player personalities will allow you to respond to all players, and they will respond to you positively.
 7. **STRIVE FOR QUALITY:** In all demonstrations make the desired objectives clear. If a player shows mastery of a skill, use him/her to demonstrate.
 8. **REINFORCE CORRECT TECHNIQUE:** In all drills and games continually emphasis the use of correct techniques.
 9. **ENCOURAGE PLAYER MOVEMENT:** At all times make players aware of importance of readiness. Emphasize weight forward on toes and bouncing instead of flat footed-ness.
 10. **ROTATE POSITIONS:** All players should be active as servers, assistants. In game situations change positions each quarter.
 11. **DEVELOP PLAYER RESPECT:** Continually get players to support one another. To show good sportsmanship towards all players including opponents, and respect for others attempts and effort.
 12. **EQUALITY AMONGST PLAYERS:** Give equal attention to all players in group or games. Do not leave the less competent players behind nor slow the advanced players.
 13. **FUN AND ENJOYMENT:** Players will respond and want to continue if things are fun. Create their enjoyment.
- **REMEMBER AS A COACH YOU SHOULD BE DEDICATED TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF ALL PLAYERS WHETHER TECHNICALLY ABLED OR NEW TO THE GAME. YOUR POSITION IS VERY IMPORTANT. YOU ARE A ROLE MODEL TO THESE CHILDREN. SET EXEMPLARY STANDARDS. DEVELOPING GOOD TOUCH AND TECHNIQUE, GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP AND A GOOD ATMOSPHERE IS THE GOAL. KEEP AWAY FROM CREATING A PRESSURE TO WIN. MAINTAIN EQUALITY THROUGHOUT YOUR SESSIONS AND EMPHASIZE FUN AND DEVELOPMENT.**

U-6 & U-8 Guidelines

Five and Six year olds can't play competitive team sports at this age. They lack the experience to understand cooperative play and the real meaning of winning and losing. Here at this level soccer is a means to an end, a way to introduce social and motor skills to young children who are just beginning to experience the world outside of home and school. Below is a list of guidelines used by the Mt. Vernon Parks and Recreation Department:

U-6

- Approximately 10-12 players per team
- 4 vs. 4 (no goalies)
- Dual Field Method will be used (SPRING). Games will be played side and the players will substitute between both games. (see attached diagram)
- Size 3 ball will be used
- Duration of game: (4) eight minute quarters with a 2 minute break between each
- NO throw-ins!! The ball will be restarted with a direct free kick. The opposing team shall be at least 4 yards away
- One coach will supervise/referee each field
- ALL players must play at least 50% of the game

* All games will be played following the FIFA Laws of the Game and the US Soccer Association amended rules. Available copies can be picked up at the Parks and Recreation office.

Key Points when Coaching U-6:

Make it fun and try to have fun yourself. Whether your players continue on playing soccer depends on whether or not they have fun. Coaching U-6 is the most fun you will have coaching soccer because you really don't have to know or do to coach U-6.

Make sure each kid gets a lot of touches at practice and they get used to using their feet at all times. Have your players dribble and kick the ball a lot so they can get used to using their feet and not their hands.

Don't let anyone get hurt. You are in control of safety measures.

Teach the following concepts and rules.

- Not using hands (except the goalie) and not tripping, holding, pushing, or hitting other players.
- The concept of a "field" that has lines that you should stay inside of.
- The concept of "our goal" and "their goal" and that when your team has the ball which way to attack. Scrimmaging other teams can be helpful.
- The concept of "attacking" and "defending" and how you try to kick the ball into the other teams goal and how you try to kick it away from your own goal.

Start teaching your players at a young age to use the inside of the foot and the "instep" of the foot (i.e., the top of the foot where the shoelaces are) to kick the ball. Discourage them from kicking it with their toes.

U-8

- Approximately 10-12 players per team
- 4 vs. 4 (no goalies)

- Dual Field Method will be used (SPRING). Games will be played side and the players will substitute between both games. (see attached diagram)
- Size 3 ball
- Duration of game: (4) eight minute quarters with a 2 minute break between each
- The throw-in: Conform to FIFA with the exception that an improperly performed throw-in can be retaken once.
- One coach will supervise/referee each field
- All players must play at least 50% of the game.

* All games will be played following the FIFA Laws of the Game and the US Soccer Association amended rules. All copies can be picked up at the Parks and Recreation office.

Key Points when Coaching U-8

With this age group of kids do not try to teach too much in one practice; their attention spans are short and it will not be much fun.

Focus on the basic rules of the game, such as not using the hands except on throw-ins. The basics are what the kids will remember the most and carry on with them to a higher level.

Dribbling and shielding the ball may be the most important skill to teach at this age.

Encourage teamwork, passing, getting open for a pass, passing to space, constant movement on offense, talking, and no straight legs (knees should always be slightly bent).

Definitely work on proper technique for inside-of-foot passing and receiving. These are the 2 most important things you can teach.

Teach proper technique for a throw-in, and start working on advanced throw-ins. Remember improper throw-ins can be retaken once.

Start teaching your players to use the inside of the foot and the “instep” of the foot (i.e., the top of the foot where the shoelaces are) to kick the ball and discourage them from kicking it with their toes.

Start to teach a “lofted” kick. This is important so your players can clear the ball when on defense and so they can send lofted passes or take lofted shots when on offense.

These are just a few of many guidelines for coaching young aged soccer players. Add your own twists and ideas to it. Remember that having fun is the most important aspect in coaching youth soccer. If you are having fun and are teaching fun, the kids will have fun and soccer will be fun for years to come.

U-6 & U-8 PROGRAM TEACHING PLANS.

KEY TO DIAGRAMS.

A, B, C Etc.



O

X



Player.

Playing area.

Ball.

Cone.

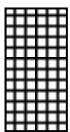
Movement of ball.

Movement of player

Movement of Player with ball



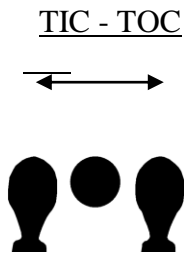
Feet with ball.



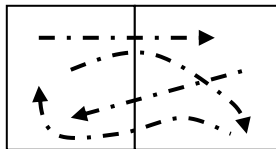
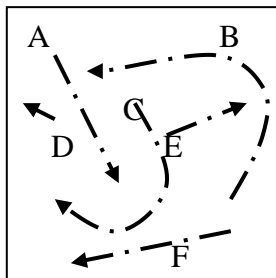
Goal

BASIC FOOT SKILLS

WARM - UPS: 10 - 15 MINS.



TECHNIQUE: 10 - 15 MINS.



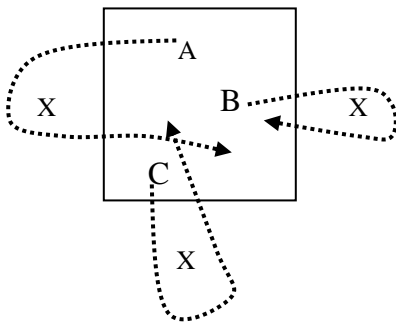
2 Squares C

WATER BREAK:

GAMES 1: 10 - 15 MINS.

Musical Soccerballs

X



BALL GYMNASTICS:

Stationary: Roll ball with bottom of foot forwards and backwards with right then left. Repeat from side to side, and then in a circular motion. Repeat all with increased speed.

On Toes.

Tick-Tock. Pass the ball from inside of left to inside of right (See Diagram)

Hat Dance. Lightly touch ball with bottom of right foot then with left. Ball should remain still. Increase speed for both.

Movement. Tick-Tock but move ball slightly forwards each touch. Take it width of field then turn and return. Same with Hat dance. Sideways stance. Roll right foot over ball and stop with inside of left. On return use other feet.

SQUARE ACTIVITIES. (SEE DIAGRAM)

Commands. Move ball inside square. Coach gives Commands like Stop, Go, Turn Left foot, Right foot, Insides, Tic-toc, etc.

Other Commands. Body Parts. Touch ball with that BP.

Find Spaces. As kids move their ball inside square they try to find as much space as possible. On Coaches command player with most space is winner.

2 Squares A. Add a 2nd square and have players on command move ball into new square.

2 Squares B. Split kids into 2 groups, 1 in each square, on command they leave their ball and switch squares to find a new one.

2 Squares C. Same as above but take the ball with them, avoiding bumping in the middle. (See Diagram)

Lose your Shadow. In the double square each player has ball and partner. The Shadow has to try and stay within 1 yd of 2 Square C. Partners Switch between Leader and Shadow.

SQUARE GAMES:

Pac Dudes. Kids inside square dribble around, 1 player (GHOST) outside square. On command Pac Dudes the for Musical Ghost has to kick all the balls out of the square. Winner is last one in square. Emphasize shielding and turning. Change ghosts. U7 all have go as Ghost. U8 have 2 Ghosts.

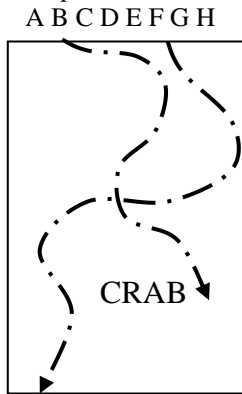
Musical Soccerballs. Place 4 cones outside square. Dribble in square, on command, players stop ball and leave it, and run to touch any one of the 4 cones. Coach removes 1 ball and When they come back into square they put there foot on ANY available ball. Player who doesn't get a ball is out. Get that player to remove next ball. Make sure all players are moving in square, not staying by the sides. (See diagram)

BASIC FOOT SKILLS

WATER BREAK:

GAMES 2: 10 - 15 MINS.

TMNC set-up.



TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA CRABS.

Players start at end of the Island with their Soccer balls.

Coach starts as crab sitting with legs forward, and can only move in this position. On Command TMNC, players have to dribble ball past Crab to the other end (Beach.) without their ball going into the ocean. They must stop the ball on the line. Crab moves to kick ball into ocean. If ball goes into ocean, then that player becomes crab. When everyone has reached the beach, and crabs are ready, then repeat in opposite direction. Last one still on Island is winner.

Emphasize. close control and movement from side to side to get past the crabs. (See Diagram)

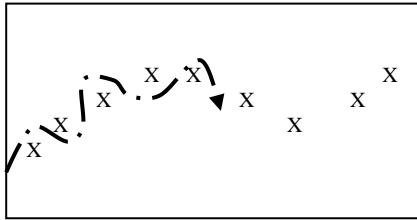
WATER BREAK: RECAP: GAME PREP: Use this time to recap on the practice and to organize for the game.

GAME: 15 - 20 MINS.

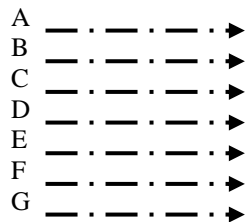
Play 4 vs 4 . Do not use GK's

SEE ADDITIONAL DRIBBLING GAMES SECTION. USING A SIMILAR STRUCTURE TO THIS PRACTICE, YOU CAN CREATE SEVERAL MORE DRIBBLING BASED PRACTICES.

DRIBBLING GAMES



How to play: Set up a bending line of cones. At 1 end of the line place a Wicked Witch (a parent, asst coach) and have players at the other end of the cones. Each player tries to dribble down the windy orange brick road, zig-zagging through the cones. At the end of the road when they meet the Wicked Witch they have to shoot the ball past her to melt her.



Game: **What's the time Mr Wolf**

How to play: Coach starts as the big bad wolf. Each little pig has a brick house (a cone) The Pigs shout "What's the time Mr Wolf" and the wolf shouts back a time. Each player advances the ball the number the wolf shouts out. Pigs ask again and repeat. When the Wolf shouts "Dinnertime", the pigs have to dribble their soccer balls back to their house and the wolf chases and tries to kick their ball away. Let each player have a go as the wolf.

Teaching points: Use soft touches to keep away from Wolf, and then dribble at speed and stop ball with feet only.

Progressions: Put cones in the way as trees that players avoid. Use multiple wolfs, or place wolf close to houses so pigs have to get past.

Game: **Pac Dudes**

Players in side square with their ball. Dribbling around trying not to bump each other who lose control of ball. Coach starts on outside of square and is a Ghost. On command Pac Dudes, the ghost has to try and knock everybody's ball out of the square.

Game: **Knockout**

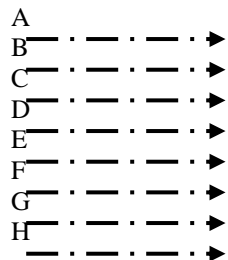
Each player with a ball inside a square. On command "knockout" players are allowed to try and kick other players balls out, but must keep their own ball inside square.

Game: **Traffic Lights**

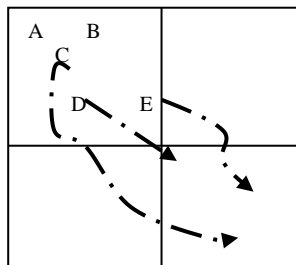
How to play: Players start on one end of (Soccer city) grid with their soccer balls (car). Coach is the traffic light (or traffic cop). Coach shouts various colors of traffic lights and players try to drive their soccer cars to Soccer town at the other end of grid. On command "red light" players need to stop their car with the sole of the foot and not move. If they move they return to soccer city and start again. Play to see who reaches Soccer town first.

Teaching Points: Dribbling and control movement.

Progressions: Add "yellow light" and make players do a stationary tic-toc or hat dance. Add additional commands: reverse where players go backwards, go home players turn and head back home, left, right etc.



S
O T
C O
C W
E N
R



3
4

Multiple Square Games:

A: Using 4 adjacent squares. All players start in one square with ball. Coach calls a square number and players move their ball to that square and keep dribbling inside new square until coach calls another number.

B: Split players into all 4 squares. Call 2 square numbers and those players have to switch squares.

C: Have players from 1 square on command try to go and steal balls

DRIBBLING GAMES

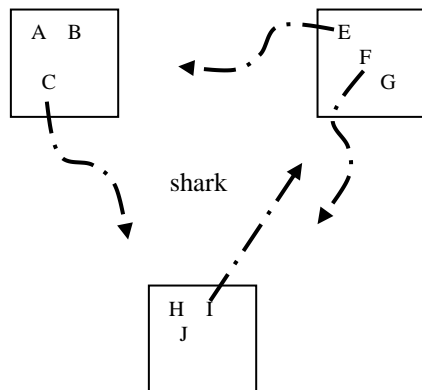
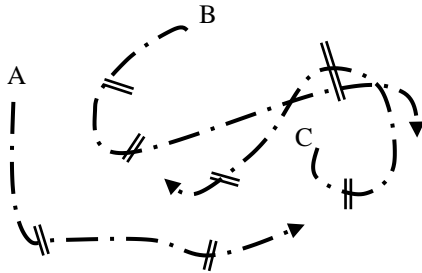
Game: **Relay races.**

Set up multiple teams of 3 or 4 players. For each team set up a short course of cones that players have to dribble through. Players then dribble back, give ball to next person who repeats the course. When all players in a team have completed they sit in a straight line with their hands on their heads.

Game: **Downhill Skiing**

Set up multiple gates in a grid. Each gate should be about 2-3 ft wide. Players are skiing (dribbling their ball) inside the grid but not going through the gates until the coach shouts “ Lets go Skiing” then players try to ski through as many different gates as possible in the time coach allows.

≡ Is a gate



Game: **Shark Attack**

Set up 3 Islands. Divide players onto the 3 Islands. Each player with a ball. Coach starts as the shark in the middle of the ocean. The shark holds a cone on his/her head, or hands to designate a shark fin, so everyone knows they are the shark. When Coach shouts “shark attack” the players have to swim (dribble) their balls to either of the other 2 islands. The shark attempts to kick soccer balls away. Any soccer balls kicked away, then that player also becomes a shark. Play until 1 person left, who becomes the new shark for the next game.

Teaching points: Players have to respond to the defenders movements and keep possession of the ball. A lot less static and more game like than the above relay races.

BASIC PASSING

WARM - UPS: 10 - 15 MINS.

TEAM GAMES.

Zig Zag. Have 3 teams of 4. Set up about 5 cones per team. players in turn zig zag through cones using foot and surface coach has stated. When all have been 1st team sitting down in straight line are the winners.

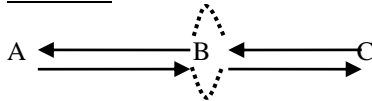
Pass and Stop. In pairs players are 3yds apart. Player 1(X) passes and player 2(X₁) stops ball. Player 2 runs backwards and player 1 runs forwards to pass ball again. Repeat for length of field then return with player roles switched.

Golf. Set up a series of cones 2 yds apart around field. Players have to pass ball through the course with the least amount of touches possible.

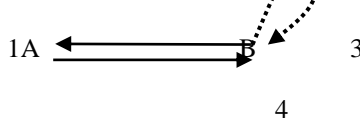
WATER BREAK:

TECHNIQUE: 10 - 15 MINS.

Various 2



Various 3



VARIOUS.

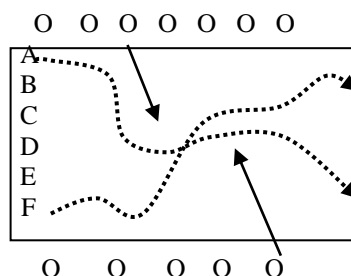
1. In pairs approx. 5 yds apart players pass back and forth. **GIVE GOOD DEMO OF TECHNIQUE.** Emphasize stopping ball 1st.

2. In 3's approx. 5 yds apart with 2 balls. A passes to B. B stops ball and passes back, then Turns to face C, who passes in. Repeat and rotate player B.

3. Numbers. In pairs, 1 ball, 4 cones in cross shape. A is by bottom cone and passes to B in center of cross. When he passes shouts a # 1,2,3,4. B stops passes back and then runs to touch that cone. When A shouts **1** players change position after passes.

4. 3 squares. Have 2 pairs in each square, with 1 ball per pair. Players move around inside their square, on command pass to their partner. Repeat. Emphasize movement and looking up.

GAMES 1: 10 - 15 MINS.



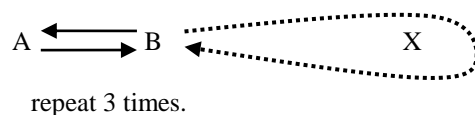
BRITISH BULLDOGS.

Set up Island like TMNC (Week 1). Have players start at one end with all the balls lined up along the two sides. Coach starts as BB.

On command players have to run to other end of Island, dodging balls that BB is passing in. If hit below knee they become a BB. Reset all the balls and repeat till everyone hit. Winner starts as BB for next game.

WATER BREAK:

GAMES 2: 10 - 15 MINS.



repeat 3 times.

Elvis Presley.

Divide into pairs and place approx. 5 - 10 yds from each other. Player A has ball. Payer B must call A's name before A passes. A passes. B stops and passes back when A calls his name. After passing B turns and runs to cone approx. 15 yds away. On return they repeat. Repeat 3 times and on final return players do Elvis shake, to show they are finished. New game A and B swap roles.

Passing Circle. Set up 2 circles. Player A is in center and other

BASIC PASSING

players have to pass to one another. Player A has to try and intercept. All players have a go as A. How many passes can be made without A touching ball.

WATER BREAK: RECAP: GAME PREP: Use this time to recap practice and to prepare for practice.

GAME: 15 - 20 MINS.

Play 4 vs. 4. Do not use GK's

SEE ADDITIONAL PASSING GAMES: USING A SIMILAR STRUCTURE TO THIS PRACTICE, YOU CAN CREATE SEVERAL MORE PASSING BASED PRACTICES.

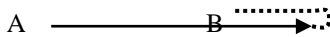
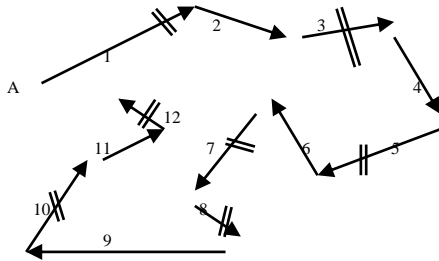
ADDITIONAL PASSING GAMES

Game: Soccer Golf

Set up a golf course similar to the skiing course using gates as the holes. Have players pass their ball through the gates in the order you designate. Players count their number of passes. The lowest score wins.

Teaching points: A variety of passing techniques, short, angled, long.

Variation: have players design the course, or use obstacles such as trees, parents that players have to pass around.



Game: Tunnel Game

In pairs players have a ball. 1 player stands with his/her legs shoulder width apart. Player tries to pass ball through the legs. They take it in turns to try and score points.

Scoring: 3 pts if it goes through without touching. 2pts if it touches a leg and still goes through, 1 pt hits leg but doesn't go through. 0pt if misses.

Progression: As ball goes through legs the tunnel player, turns and runs and receives it dribbles back towards partner and passes. The partner moves to let the ball pass through legs, turns and runs to receive it.

Teaching point: For the progression it gets the receiver into getting their body behind the ball.

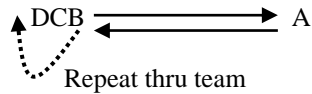
Game: Stuck in the mud.

In a grid about 20 by 20, players are dribbling their soccer balls. Have 2 or 3 players as Swamp Monsters outside the grid with a ball each. On "go" the swamp monsters dribble their balls into the grid and attempt to hit players on the knees and below or soccer ball. If a player gets hit, or leaves the grid, they are stuck in the mud and they pick the ball up and hold it on their head, and stand with legs apart. Other players may release them by passing their ball through the stuck players legs. Rotate through the team as Swamp monsters and see who can get the most people stuck.

Teaching Points: Good passing technique, passing to where a player is running, good control, turning and changing of direction technique for the players in the swamp.

CONTROL AND TURNING

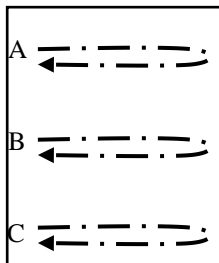
WARM UPS: 10 - 15 MINS.



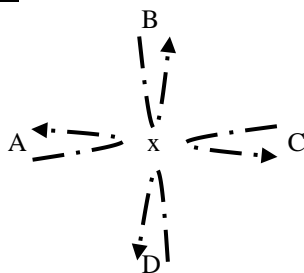
WATER BREAK:

TECHNIQUE: 20 - 25 MINS.

Choice of set ups.



OR:



WATER BREAK:

GAMES 1: 15- 20 MINS.

PASSING GAMES.

Wall game. Set up 2 or 3 teams. Player A is 5 - 10 yds from group. A is the Wall. Each player passes to the Wall. When it comes back he stops it, and then goes to end of line. All players pass to wall, then player B becomes wall. All players have turn as wall. When B, C, and D have turn as Wall team is finished and sit down in line.
Recap. BALL GYMNASTICS.

COERVER MOVES. (ALSO SEE MOVES APPENDIX)

U6

1. roll
2. Cut (inside and outside)
3. Cryuff
4. Barnes

U8

1. roll
2. cut (inside and outside)
3. Cryuff
4. Barnes
5. Step 1 and 2.
6. Scissors.

Roll: Roll backwards with sole of shoe.

Cut: Cut across body with inside. Then with outside.

Cryuff. Put standing leg alongside ball. Look to shoot, then turn foot inwards and drag ball back behind standing foot with inside of other foot.

Barnes: Step over ball with outside of one foot (LUNGE), then push ball forwards with outside of other foot.

Step 1: Fake a pass with inside of foot, but step over ball and cut ball back with outside of same foot.

Step 2: Opposite as above. Step over with outside, cut with inside.

Scissors: As with Step 1, but cut ball back with inside of other foot.

Turning. Allow approx. 5 mins of freedom. In half field get them moving with the ball trying new tricks , moves, or coervers.

1 V. 1'S.

Set up. Square with 1 pair per side, 1 ball per pair. A and B face each other about 1 yd. apart. A has ball and B is shadow. B is not allowed to steal ball. A must try and stop ball by 1 of the cones while 'losing' B. Start without ball to get the idea of body movement.

Emphasize upper body movement, change of direction and speed.

Keep away. Set up. 3 squares, 2 pairs per square, 1 ball per pair.

Player A has to try and keep ball away from B. And C away from D. When player loses ball, or when coach gives command, whichever is first, players switch roles.

WATER BREAK: RECAP: GAME PREP: If Spare time, recap Coerver moves.

Use this time to recap practice, and to organize for the game.

GAME: 20 MIN.

SHOOTING

WARM UP: 10 MINS.

2 GROUPS.

Coerver: Half the group practice coerver moves in half field.

Juggling: Other half practice juggling. Change after 5 - 7 mins.

TECHNIQUE: 10 - 15 MINS.

SHOOTING.

Striking with laces.

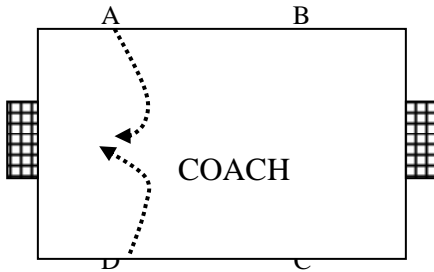
1. Circle around coach. players sit in crab position. Try to kick back into coaches hands. 2. This time players are standing and drop ball onto their foot. Same objective. 3. Same but in pairs approx. 5 yds apart. 4. Now drop ball and try and get through partners legs. 5. Ball on ground. Partner approx. 7 - 10yds away. try to get through legs. 6. Set up. Goal of 2 cones approx. 12ft. Players either side of goal approx. Emphasize: Strike middle of ball, strike with center of foot, keep ankle solid, flex from hip and knee, focus on ball only, be relaxed.

GAMES 1: 20 MINS.

PASS AND SHOOT.

Set up. 2 lines of players facing goal on half way line, in line with goal posts. Coach approx. 7 yds from players. Goal divided into 3. Players pass to coach who passes to side and/or forwards. Player runs on and shoots to goal. U7 can dribble. have to shoot before 5 yds and aim for corners. 10 points for corners, 5 points for center.

Numbers game.



NUMBERS.

Set up. 4 groups of players. Each group is numbered 1 thru 3. Coach on center spot with all balls.

Play. Coach calls # and groups A play D, and B play C, in each half. Player whose # is called tries to score, without going into arc.

Progression. Call 2 or 3 #'s .
(SEE DIAGRAM.)

WATER BREAK: RECAP: GAME PREP: Use this time to recap, and organize for game.

GAME: 20 MIN.

WARM UP: 10 - 15 MINS.

TEAM GAMES.

Set up. 2 teams of 6 or 3 teams of 4. 6 cones in line approx. 5yds apart.

1. Passing. Wall Game. (see week 3 W-up.)

2. Tunnel ball. 1st player rolls ball through everyone's legs. End person picks ball up runs to front and repeats. repeat through team. Sit down in line when finished.

3. Over under. 1st passes over head, next under legs. repeat as above.

4. Dribbling. dribble through cones. Repeat as above.

Emphasize: Team work, co-ordination.

TECHNIQUE: 10 - 15 MINS.

WALL PASS.

Set up. Same as Shoot and save (week 5) but use full field, and coach is in center circle. Balls in goals.

Play. Similar as shoot and save but player is served ball by GK. Dribbles forwards and passes to coach. Coach wall passes back, and player runs on dribbles and shoots. GK serves his line, goes to end of line and is replaced in goal by the 1st shooter.

Progression. Use player for the wall pass. Don't dribble on return pass.

GAME 1: 10 - 15 MINS.

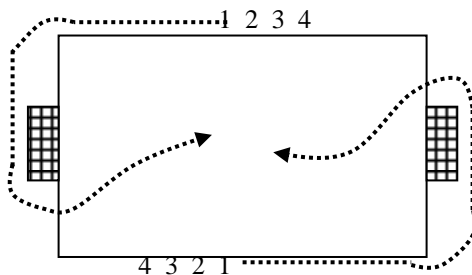
ENGLAND VS. AMERICA.

Set up. Half field. Divide into 2 groups. Put cones on corners. Teams set up on half way on opposite sides facing opposite goals. Players on each team given #'s 1 thru 6.

Play. Coach calls a # and serves ball into field. The players with that # run around corner cone, and goal and enter field to try and score against other team's player.

Progression. Call 2, 3 or more #'s at once. Introduce teamwork. Set conditions. i.e. have to make a pass. etc.

England vs. America



GAME 2: 10 - 15 MINS. PLAYERS CHOICE.

Recap the major skills developed over the weeks. Allow players to choose favorite game or games.

WATER BREAK: GAME PREP:

Organize for game.

GAME: 20 MIN .

Allow free play. Encourage team work

U-10 & U-12 Guidelines

The separation between levels becomes more pronounced and often the parents of the top players bring increased expectations to the situation. Some parents see these years as a continuation of a hobby, while others see it as a final preparation for “real soccer”. Often at this age when some children will start to gravitate to a position role. Soccer at this age is a hobby, and hopefully they are there because they want to. At this age children are capable of fairly sophisticated games, goalies are now being played on a bigger goal.

U-10

- Approximately 12-13 players per team
- 8 vs. 8 w/ one goalie (subject to change, depending on participation numbers)
- Size 4 ball
- Duration of game: (2) twenty-five minute halves. 5 minute break at halftime
- The Parks and Recreation Department will provide a referee. Each team is responsible for providing a linesman.
- Referees will be instructed to allow throw-ins to be retaken for the first half of the season, following the 4th week a foul throw-in will result in loss of possession and the other team will be awarded a throw-in.
- All players must play at least 50% of the game.

* All games will be played following the FIFA Laws of the Game and the US Soccer Association amended rules. A copy of these rules can be picked up at the Parks and Recreation Department.

Key Points when Coaching U-10

It is vital to have an idea of what you want your players to learn before you step on the field. If you do not you will waste valuable training time, bore your players, and eventually lose the interests of your players.

Have an idea or goal of where you want your team in terms of soccer skills at the end of the season. Focus on improving each player's skills to the best of their ability.

Further develop the skills that should be taught at the U-6 & U-8 level, i.e. dribbling and shielding the ball, teamwork, shooting, spreading the offense, throw-in technique etc...

Teach cooperative attacking and cooperative defending. Make sure all players are involved in the attacking but with an awareness of cover (by the goalkeeper and at least one defensive player). All players are participating in the cooperative defending, even the most advanced players getting “goal side” of opposing players. Continue to develop and show the principles of defense so all players gain the knowledge of defense.

Teach goalkeeping. This is the first level that goalies are used. Goalkeeping is an important aspect to soccer. (I have attached a goalkeeping technique handout.)

You can now more effectively introduce the concept of “team play”. Unlike at younger ages kids at the U-10 age are more receptive to playing a passing game. Try not to fill their heads about tactics and formations. **KEEP IT SIMPLE!** Also never stifle the creative, gifted dribbler. This is a time for players of all ability levels to experiment and learn from trial and error.

U-12

- Approximately 13-14 players per team
- 9 vs. 9 with one goalie (subject to change, depending on participation numbers)
- Size 4 ball
- Duration of game: (2) twenty-five minute halves. 5 minute break at halftime
- The Parks and Recreation Department will provide a referee. Each team is responsible for providing a linesman.
- Referees will be instructed to stop play for an offside call. Explain to the players what an offside penalty is and then resume play with an indirect free kick for team last in possession of the ball.
- All players must play at least 50% of the game

* All games will be played following the FIFA Laws of the Game and the US Soccer Association amended rules. A copy of these rules can be picked up at the Parks and Recreation Department.

Develop a basic understanding of the concept and rule of off-side. The referees will stop play for an offside call and then explain to the players what the rule is. The team that was at fault will lose possession of the ball.

Continued concentration at this age on the more important developments of appreciation of the team principles of play and their roles when the team is attacking or defending. High concentration on basic skills in cooperative play, i.e., passing, control, shooting, and introduction to heading, goalkeeper techniques and role. Continue this development of basic skills with limited pressure but in a challenging environment.

The players should have a basic understanding of how to interchange roles during the course of play. Teach and explain to the players what their individual role on the team is when they are attacking the ball or defending. The players will need guidance in the performance of these roles due to the greater number of players on the field and the increased size of the field.

Introduce and prepare the kids to 11 vs. 11 play.

These are just a few guidelines that I thought were important. Add your own twist and thoughts on things and remember to have fun. That is the most important aspect on coaching youth soccer.

